NSADaily Defending Our Nation. Securing The Future.

(U) History Today - 24 January 2013

FROM: Center for Cryptologic History | Run Date: 01/24/2013

(U) The country went through an ordeal at home as well as abroad during the Vietnam War. It was an armed conflict fought with the most modern of technology, in a relatively undeveloped country, against an enemy that made up for its military disadvantages with help from the Communist bloc and a sheer will to win. The U.S. military applied its war-making machine in an intensive manner, including carpet bombing and the introduction of an immense number of ground troops. The war seemed to drag on without the "light at the end of the tunnel" repeatedly promised by political leaders.

(U) The American public turned against the war over time. Dissatisfaction first erupted at universities and then began to spread, slowly at first, but ultimately university protestors joined forces with civil rights activists to become an all-encompassing social movement. Within two years of the first organized domestic protest in 1965, massive rallies occurred, even in the nation's capital. Indeed, policymakers were no longer welcome at -- nor felt safe entering -- most college campuses across the country.

(U) It is notable that a former military cryptologist was at the forefront of one aspect of this movement.

(U) Jeff Sharlet could speak with authority on the war. He had attended a military prep school, and then went to college at Indiana University. He soon left school to enlist in the army, and was assigned to the Army Security Agency (ASA). The major reason for his enlistment was a promise of training in a major European language, with subsequent posting on that continent. He was soon disabused of that plan when he received orders to study Vietnamese at the Army Language School (now DLI). After training of nearly a year, he was a qualified linguist and was sent to the field.

(U) Sharlet spent the first half of 1963 at Stotsensberg Station on Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines. From there, he was deployed to the war zone. He spent time with the 3rd Radio Research Unit at Davis Station, followed by assignment to intercept duty at Phu Lam, and then to operational support at Phu Bai. Before he left Vietnam in May 1964, he had seen a great deal of the Vietnam War.

(U) He returned to the United States and went back to college in Indiana just as the war and protests were ramping up. He joined a radical student organization known as Students for a Democratic Society, eventually becoming a chapter president, and began to participate actively in major protests Enrolling at the University of Chicago for graduate school gave him a platform by which to champion those like himself. He got in on the ground floor when the Vietnam Veterans Against the War was formed.

(U) Most importantly, Sharlet established himself as editor and publisher of the first veterans' antiwar newspaper, *Vietnam GI*. Its first issue made a huge splash in January 1968. By the summer, his newspaper had a circulation of at least 30,000, not counting the hands through which illicit copies were passed among active duty military. This newspaper was heralded at the time and since as having provided a voice to antiwar protesters in the military.

(U) Sharlet unfortunately passed away prematurely from cancer well before he was thirty.

(U) A fuller examination of Sharlet's life and his newspaper will appear soon in our periodic series known as *Cryptologic Almanac*. If you are not already a subscriber to the *Almanac*, become one via the SID Listprocessor ("go listproc-do") and select ESS1364.

(U) Want to discuss this item with interested -- and interesting -- folks? Visit the Center for Cryptologic

(b)(3)-P.L. 8 1/23/2015

DOCID: 4190924

History's blog, *History Rocks*. ("go history rocks")

(U) <u>Larger view of photo</u>

(U) Have a question or comment on "History Today"? Contact us at DL cch or cch@nsa.

Content Steward: Corporate Communications, Messaging & Public Affairs, DN1, 963-5901 (<u>email</u>)
Page Publisher: Corporate Web Solutions, DN22, 963-8642 (<u>email</u>)

Last Modified: 01/23/2015 | Last Reviewed: 01/23/2015

[508 Accessibility]

DERIVED FROM: NSA/CSSM 1-52, DATED: 20130930, DECLASSIFY ON: 20380930
Dynamic Page -- Highest Possible Classification is
~~TOP SECRET//SI/TALENT KEYHOLE//REL TO USA, AUS, CAN, GBR, NZL~~

(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36